

REMARKS**Summary of the Office Action**

Claim 23 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) allegedly as being anticipated by Searby et al. (US, 5,459,529).

Claims 1-4, 8, and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) allegedly as being unpatentable over Dotsubo et al. (US, 6,556,243) in view of Searby et al.

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) allegedly as being unpatentable over Dotsubo et al. in view of Searby et al., and in further view of Simons et al. (US, 5,917,549).

Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) allegedly as being unpatentable over Dotsubo et al. in view of Searby et al., and in further view of Katayama et al. (US, 5,982,951).

Claims 11-13 and 19-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) allegedly as being unpatentable over Searby et al. in view of Dotsubo et al.

Claim 16 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) allegedly as being unpatentable over Searby et al. in view of Ejima et al. (US, 6,259,469).

Claims 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) allegedly as being unpatentable over Searby et al. in view of Katayama et al.

Claims 6, 7, and 14 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but are indicated to as being allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Summary of Response to the Office Action

Claim 1 and 11 have been amended to incorporate the allowable features of dependent claims 6 and 14, respectively. Claim 7 has been rewritten in independent form including the features of its base claim 1. Claims 20 and 23 have been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 14. Claims 6 and 14 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. No

new matter has been added. Accordingly, claims 1-5, 7-13, and 15-23 are presently pending for consideration.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

In the Final Office Action, claim 23 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) allegedly as being anticipated by Searby et al. Claims 1-4, 8, and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) allegedly as being unpatentable over Dotsubo et al. in view of Searby et al. Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) allegedly as being unpatentable over Dotsubo et al. in view of Searby et al., and in further view of Simons et al. Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) allegedly as being unpatentable over Dotsubo et al. in view of Searby et al., and in further view of Katayama et al., claims 11-13 and 19-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) allegedly as being unpatentable over Searby et al. in view of Dotsubo et al. Claim 16 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) allegedly as being unpatentable over Searby et al. in view of Ejima et al. Claims 17 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) allegedly as being unpatentable over Searby et al. in view of Katayama et al.

Although Applicant disagrees with the assertions made by the Office, nevertheless, to facilitate an immediate allowance of the present application, Applicant amends independent claim 1 by incorporating the allowable features of dependent claim 6, rewrites dependent claim 7 in independent form, and amends independent claims 11, 20, and 23 by incorporating the allowable features of dependent claim 14. Applicant respectfully submits that the Office acknowledges at paragraphs 29-32 on page 16 of the Final Office Action that claims 6, 7, and 14 are allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that by amendment above, independent claims 1, 7, 11, 20, and 23 are now in clear condition for allowance.

Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of claims under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a) be withdrawn. Further, dependent claims 2-5, 8-10, 12, 13, 15-19, 21, and 22 are also in clear condition for allowance due, at least in part, to their dependencies to allowable base claims 1, 7, 11, and 20, respectively.

CONCLUSION


In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application, withdrawal of all rejections, and the timely allowance of all pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.R.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully Submitted,

MORGAN, LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP

By: _____


Sumiyo Onda
Reg. No. L 0289

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Customer No. 09629

MORGAN, LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP

1111 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20004

Telephone: (202) 739-3000

Facsimile: (202) 739-3001